

# Maricopa County Environmental Services Department

## Mobile Food Units



Office Inspection Hours  
Monday through Friday  
12:00pm to 5:00pm



### Mobile Food Program

1645 E Roosevelt  
Phoenix, AZ 85006  
(602) 506-6872

## Introduction

This guideline has been developed for the purpose of assisting operators in permitting a mobile food unit to prepare and serve safe food. In addition, this guideline will help each applicant understand the plan review process and what is required to permit and operate a Mobile Food Unit.

Each unit must be operated in full compliance with the Maricopa County Environmental Health Code and all other applicable regulations. Maricopa County Environmental Services requires that each Mobile Food Unit be permitted, operate from an approved commissary, and employ individuals who have received their Maricopa County Food Service Worker or Certified Manager cards.

Mobile Food units must be self-contained and maintained readily movable at all times. Connections to sewer and water are generally not allowed and only under specific circumstances. In general, mobile food units are permitted to sell a variety of food types and menu restrictions are not required. However, please note that food items that are undercooked in any manner require a consumer advisory (i.e. ceviche).

### Mobile Food Program Office Hours

The Mobile Food Office is open Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm. **PLEASE NOTE THAT INSPECTIONS ARE ONLY CONDUCTED FROM 12PM TO 5PM OR BY APPOINTMENT.** Call the office duty desk at 602-506-6872 for additional inspection information. Be aware that calls will be returned in the order they are received. The mobile food office is located at 1645 E Roosevelt, Phoenix. The office and parking for Mobile Food inspections is on the west side of the building.

## Permits

All Mobile Food Units must be in full compliance before any permit is issued. New units, vehicles that have not been permitted in the last three years, and units lacking current plans are required to go through the plan review process and pay any associated fees (see page 4 for details).

In order to renew or obtain a permit, each unit must have a passing inspection on file that has been completed within the last six months. To receive an inspection, the mobile food unit must be fully operational, with all water tanks filled and equipment functional. No electrical power or water supply is available at the inspection office. In addition, the following information is required:

- ◆ Properly completed application (page 14) and permit fee
- ◆ Signed Commissary agreement (page 13)
- ◆ Vending route
- ◆ Toilet Use agreement
- ◆ Complete menu

## Definitions

Depending on the types of foods to be served and the vehicle, the mobile food program has a variety of permit types that may apply. Please be aware that each type of permit has certain restrictions and applications. According to the Maricopa County Environmental Health Code, the following definitions apply:

**“Mobile Food Unit”** means and refers to an enclosed vehicle-mounted food establishment designated to be readily movable from which food is composed, compounded, processed or prepared and from which the food is vended, sold or given away.

**“Pushcart”** means and refers to a non-self-propelled vehicle designated to be readily movable which is limited to the serving of non-potentially hazardous foods or commissary-wrapped potentially hazardous foods maintained at proper temperatures, or limited to the assembly and serving of frankfurters. Unpackaged non-potentially hazardous food items approved for sale from a pushcart shall be limited to popcorn, nuts, produce, pretzels and similar bakery products, shaved ice, and snow cones.

**“Food Peddler”** means and refers to a retail food establishment in operation from a vehicle designated to be readily movable from which wrapped, properly labeled non-potentially hazardous foods or packaged potentially hazardous foods held at proper temperatures, frozen or canned prepared food which, packaged, portioned, kept in ready-to-eat units or raw fruits and vegetables are vended, sold, or given away but in which establishment the food is not composed, compounded, thawed, reheated, cut, cooked, processed or prepared. Food peddlers may dispense soda fountain drinks, hot drinks, and assemble snow cones from approved and properly installed equipment. An approved self-contained hand washing facility must be installed for a food peddler to dispense any type of open and unpackaged food or drink product.

**“Temporary Food Establishment”** means and refers to a food establishment that operates in conjunction with a fair, rodeo, exhibition or similar public event for not more than fourteen (14) consecutive days within any permit year provided it is the same permittee, at the same location and same event. At the termination of the event the temporary food establishment shall be removed from the premises.

**“Food Catering”** is a food establishment where a pre-arranged number of meals and/or food products are prepared at one permitted premise for immediate service and consumption at another pre-arranged off-site location for a temporary event or other occurrence.

**“Commissary”** means a food establishment that acts as a base of operations for a mobile food establishment, food vending establishment, temporary (itinerant) food establishment, adventure food establishment, or seasonal food establishment. The commissary provides facilities for adequate storage of food, food containers, or food supplies; equipment for adequate washing and sanitizing of food equipment and utensils; an outdoor servicing area for the sanitary disposal of liquid waste, for handling and disposal of garbage, grease, and rubbish originating from the mobile food establishment; an adequate outdoor servicing area for washing and storage of the mobile food establishment; facilities for filling the potable water holding tank in a sanitary manner; electrical outlets for establishments that require electrical service.

## Plan Submittal

One complete set of plans must be submitted for each vehicle or trailer. The plans must be drawn to scale (e.g. 1/4" = 1 ft.) on 8½ X 11 inches or larger on white paper with dark ink only, blue prints, or other standard floor plans. The plans must show schematic **TOP VIEW** of equipment layout and model numbers, etc. and **SIDE VIEW** of electrical and plumbing installations.

Write the business name and submittal date on each page of the plans. Also include the number of pages submitted (i.e. page 4 of 6).

Generally, the plan review process takes up to 14 business days to complete. For those individuals who require faster service, an expedited plan review can be done at an additional fee. Expedited plan review requires up to five (5) business days to complete.

The fee schedule is as follows:

Permit type	Standard Plan Review *	Expedite Plan Review *	Permit fee *
Mobile Food Unit	\$145.00	\$290.00	\$490.00

After your plans have been reviewed, a Notification of Plan Review Approval letter will be mailed. Upon receipt of this letter, you may proceed with construction, remodeling, or conversion of the unit.. Please be sure to review the letter for any changes and modifications that may be needed to your unit before a permit can be issued.

When construction and/or any required upgrades/modifications have been made, bring the mobile food unit to the office for an inspection. The mobile food unit must be clean and all equipment (including refrigerators, steam tables, vent hoods and water heaters) operating. If the unit is in compliance with the Maricopa County Environmental Health Code, a permit will be issued. In addition, the following information is also needed at the time of permitting:

- ♦ Applicable permit fees
- ♦ Signed Commissary agreement (enclosed)
- ♦ Vending route
- ♦ Toilet Use agreement
- ♦ Complete menu

## Plan Requirements

The plans and specifications for all Mobile Food Units shall include the following information:

- ◆ Proposed layout, mechanical schematics, construction materials, and finish schedules. The plans should be submitted with a 1/4 inch = 1 foot scale and must include the following
- ◆ Number, types and location of all sinks and drain boards. In addition, provide the dimensions for all sink compartments and drain boards.
- ◆ Refrigeration and other cold holding equipment.
- ◆ Food preparation and service areas. Provide the dimensions of the serve out windows.
- ◆ Dry goods storage areas
- ◆ Provide details in the plans such as the capacities, positioning, and placement of the potable water tank, wastewater tank, and hot water heater. In addition, the placement of the water inlets and outlets for the potable and wastewater tanks.
- ◆ Show the location of vents for the water tanks and the backflow prevention and overflow devices in the plumbing system.
- ◆ Provide a finish schedule for the floor, wall, and ceiling surfaces.
- ◆ Show the design, positioning and placement of the hood/ventilation system.

## Construction Requirements

The following list is meant to help outline certain requirements of the Maricopa County Environmental Health Code (Chapter VIII). Is it not all inclusive and other requirements may be applied depending on the menu and special needs of the unit.

- ◆ Equipment must be constructed of approved material, adequate in size, easily cleanable, and in good repair. Equipment design, construction, and installation must meet ANSI or NSF standards. The use of household refrigerators, stoves, sinks, vent hoods, and other equipment is not permitted.
- ◆ Food contact surfaces in the food preparation and utensil washing areas shall be free of breaks, open seams, cracks, chips, inclusions, pits, sharp internal angles, corners, and crevices. Formica, Melamine, laminated shelving or similar surfaces are not permitted in food preparation, storage, production or ware washing areas.
- ◆ Service openings shall be limited to 216 square inches (such as 12"X18") each, and equipped with a screen or window which shall be closed when not in use. Multiple service opening shall be at least 18 inches apart. Protect the serve-out windows against fly entrance by an approved sliding screen, window or a mechanical air curtain over windows.
- ◆ The cab or driving portion of the vehicle must be separated from the food preparation and serving area by a permanent solid wall partition.
- ◆ Provide a NSF approved or equivalent stainless steel three-compartment sink with an adequate (144 square inches) drain board at each end or one drain board and a drain rack mounted directly over the sink. The sink must be large enough for the largest item/utensil to be washed. Minimum sink compartment sizes are 12" x 12" x 10" deep
- ◆ Sink faucets shall be mixing or combination type and all faucet necks shall reach all compartments in multi-compartment sinks.

## Construction Requirements Continued

- ◆ Provide a permanently installed hand wash sink in the food preparation area. Minimum hand wash sink size is 9" x 9" x 5" deep.
- ◆ Provide a permanently mounted potable water tank or tanks that can hold a minimum capacity of 30 gallons. This potable water system must be directly and fully recharged when filled from a water inlet. The water heater capacity may be included in the potable water system capacity if the water heater is fully recharged when potable water system is recharged.
- ◆ Provide a permanently installed wastewater storage tank that is 15% greater than the combined capacity of all tanks that can hold potable water. This would mean all potable water tanks plus the water heater tanks capacity.
- ◆ The water heater shall be of adequate capacity and recovery rate to furnish a continuous supply of hot water whenever the vehicle is in operation. Minimum capacity is five gallons. An instant water heater meeting all requirements may be approved.
- ◆ Exhaust Hood Requirements: Commercial cooking or display equipment, which produces smoke, steam, grease, mists, particulate matter, condensation, vapors, fumes, odors, or create sanitation or indoor air quality problems will require a hood. Hoods shall be designed and installed to prevent grease and condensation from collecting on walls, ceilings, and dripping into food or onto food contact surfaces. Canopy hoods must have at least a 6 inch overlap, over all cooking surfaces, on all open sides. All hoods shall be flashed solid to the ceiling or adjacent walls. All hoods must comply with the latest Uniform Mechanical Code. Exhaust fans, makeup air fans and inside fan motors on units supplying make-up air shall be interlocked so they operate simultaneously and shall be operated by a single switch.
- ◆ Provide a food grade water hose designated for drinking water use only. This hose is to be used only to fill the fresh water tank. Store the hose on the vehicle with ends fastened together.
- ◆ Wall surfaces could be FRP, stainless steel or aluminum.
- ◆ Floor surfaces used could be aluminum diamond plate, stainless steel, or commercial grade vinyl composition tile or sheets.
- ◆ Ceiling surfaces could be stainless steel, plastic laminate, plastic coated fiberboard metal clad fiberboard or FRP.
- ◆ All connections on the vehicle for waste disposal facilities shall be of different size or type than those used for supplying potable water to these vehicles. The waste connection shall be located lower than the water inlet connection to preclude contamination of the potable water system. In addition, wastewater outlet shall be greater than 1" unless otherwise approved by the Department.
- ◆ All water tanks, pumps, and hoses shall be flushed and sanitized before being placed in service after construction, repair, modification, and periods of nonuse longer than 7-days. Potable water tanks shall be flushed and sanitized monthly.
- ◆ Provide adequate ventilation and lighting. Minimum lighting requirements are 50 foot candles where a food employee is working with food. All bulbs must be shatterproof or shielded.

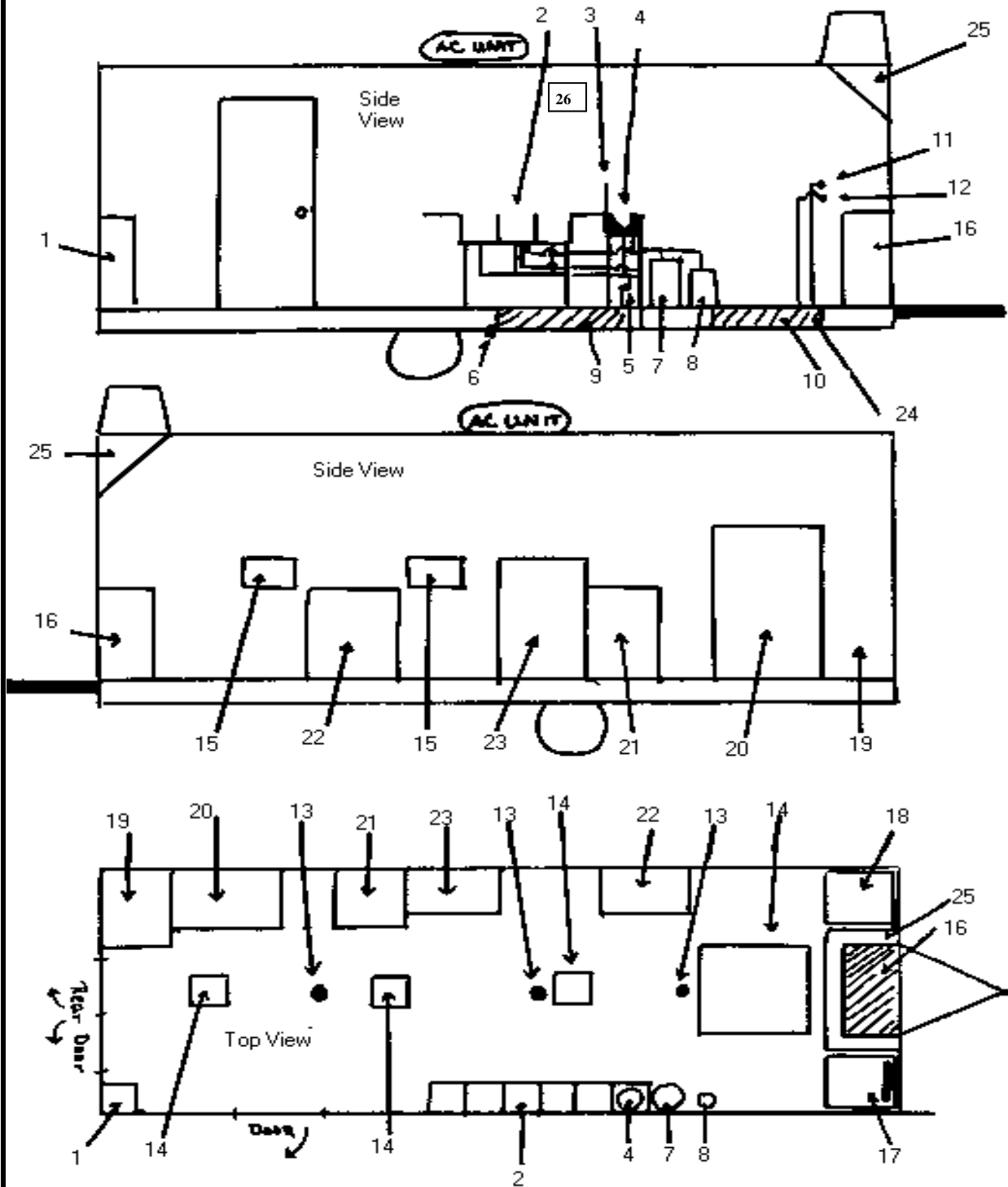
# Plan Submittal Example

Page 1 of 2

ES Foods

March 31, 2004

Scale: 1/4 inch = 1 foot



1. Steel storage compartment for chemical storage
  2. NSF approved, 3-compartment sink with 12" x 12" x 12" compartments, 12" faucet, and 12" x 12" drain boards sloped to drain.
  3. 12" splashguard between hand sink and 3-compartment sink
  4. Hand sink with 10" x 10" x 6" with 4" faucet
  5. P-trap assembly
  6. 4" drain valve
  7. 6 gallon water heater (on floor)
  8. Demand Pump—1.34 gpm with check valve
  9. 45 gallon wastewater tank, sloped to drain at 1/2 inch per foot.
  10. 30 gallon steel potable water tank, food grade, corrosion resistant
  11. Potable water fill—3/4" inlet valve with screw cap, check valve, water inlet is 2" above vent line
  12. Vent line. Both the vent line exit and potable water fill inlet are in a stainless steel box with door. The vent line terminates downward.
  13. Shielded dome lights that delivers 50 foot candles light
  14. Sky lights with screens—16 mesh per inch. Sky lights can be opened for make-up air for hood.
  15. Serve out windows (12" H x 18 W" with 16 mesh per inch self-closing screen doors)
  16. Propane grill (36" W x 36" H x 18" D with waste container beneath)
  17. NSF approved refrigerator (24" W x 24" D x 36" H)
  18. Steel table (24" W x 24" D x 36" H)
  19. Steel enclosed generator compartment, completely sealed from interior of trailer.
  20. Dry storage steel shelving unit
  21. NSF approved freezer unit (24" W x 24" D x 36" H)
  22. NSF Approved hot holding cabinet (30" W x 36" H x 18" D)
  23. NSF approved refrigerator (30"W x 48" H x 18"D)
  24. Overflow device located 2" below water inlet on tank
  25. Type one high velocity hood assembly. Hood has a 6" overhang of grill and is made completely with steel. Base of hood to cooking surface is 3 feet. Hood uses vertically positioned hood baffles sloped to at least a 45 degree angle from horizontal. A grease collection tray and cup is used. Hood in accordance with latest edition of uniform mechanical code.
  26. Outlet for vent line from waste tank.
- ♦ All plumbing will comply with uniform plumbing code. Potable water tank recharges to 30 gallon capacity with direct fill. Waste lines from 3-compartment sink and hand sink are PVC. All other lines are copper.
  - ♦ Finish schedule: Floor—aluminum diamond plate  
Walls and ceiling— FRP  
Wall and ceiling behind hood assembly - stainless steel.
  - ♦ Menu: Hot dogs, hamburgers, steak sandwiches, chips, canned soda, and ice cream.



## Commissary

The commissary is a base of operations for all mobile food units, pushcarts, and food peddlers selling potentially hazardous foods (ice cream trucks exempt). Each vehicle is required to operate from an approved commissary and report daily for all food supplies, cleaning and servicing operations. These servicing activities cannot be done at a private residence. Each commissary is required to be constructed and operated in compliance with the requirements of the Maricopa County Environmental Health Code.

Depending on the needs of the vehicle, commissaries may have different services available. In general, commissaries are used for the following:

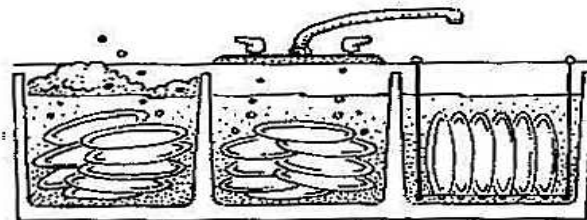
- ° Fresh water supply
- ° Food preparation
- ° Grey water disposal
- ° Vending unit cleaning facilities
- ° Vending unit storage
- ° Food Storage
- ° Garbage disposal
- ° Warewashing facilities
- ° Chemical storage

In order to obtain a permit from this Department, a signed commissary agreement is required for each unit at the time of initial permitting and at permit renewal. Be aware that each commissary agreement will be verified to ensure the facility is able to provide your operation with the services needed.



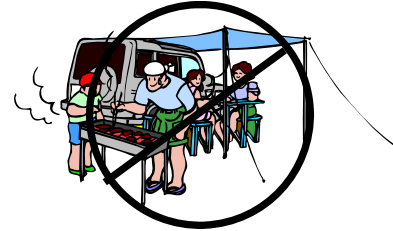
In addition, the Maricopa County Environmental Health Code requires each permit holder to maintain a log of visits to the approved commissary. The log must be written in permanent, waterproof ink, and maintained within the unit at all times. Logs will be requested on a random basis.

The Department provides a list of approved commissaries located within Maricopa County. Before making any arrangements, please inquire about the type of services offered, hours of operation, and other pertinent information. This list is not inclusive and other facilities may be approved as a commissary if the services provided meet the needs of the Food Peddler operation. Additional facilities will be evaluated on an individual basis. Please feel free to contact our office for an updated list of approved commissaries.



## General Operating Requirements for all Mobile Food Permits

- ◆ The business name and vehicle number must be plainly indicated on the unit. Letters must be of contrasting colors and at least three inches high and a stroke width 3/8 inches wide.
- ◆ Permit stickers must be clearly visible from the rear exterior of the vehicle. In addition, the permit to operate must be maintained with the vehicle at all times. Photocopies are not allowed.
- ◆ All food sales must occur within the mobile food unit. Outside grills, buffets or other pieces of equipment are not allowed.
- ◆ All food service workers are required to obtain Food Service Worker cards. In addition, one Certified Food Manager is required for the person who oversees all aspects of the food service on each individual Mobile Food Unit. The person in charge has 90 days to obtain the certification. Please call (602) 506-2960 for information on testing and locations.
- ◆ All mobile food units must be maintained **readily movable** at all times. Connections to sewer and water are generally not allowed and only under specific circumstances.
- ◆ For those units that will be using electricity on a temporary basis, a back-up generator is required to be attached to the mobile food unit.
- ◆ Employees who are sick should not be allowed to work in the food preparation areas.



## Food Source

- ◆ All food and beverages must be from an approved source. It shall be safe, unadulterated, and honestly presented. Food prepared in a private home may not be used or offered for human consumption in a Mobile Food Unit. **All homemade food products are prohibited.**



- ◆ All packaged foods shall be labeled in accordance with FDA guidelines (product name, processor name, address/phone of processor, weight and ingredients must be in English). Records of food purchases, invoices, and receipts must be kept on the mobile food unit or some other convenient location for at least 90 days following the date of purchase.
- ◆ Ice that is consumed or comes in contact with food must come from an approved source and shall be obtained only in chipped, crushed, or cubed form. Ice that is obtained from outdoor ice towers at the commissaries is not approved for use in beverages or human consumption. Ice for consumption must be handled with an approved ice scoop equipped with a handle and between uses the scoop should be stored in the ice with the handle up. Customer self-service of ice is prohibited.
- ◆ All condiments must be dispensed from squeeze bottles, pump dispensers, individual packets or condiment containers with self-closing lids.



## Date Marking

For packaged, potentially hazardous foods that will be sold off the truck (wrapped sandwiches, lunch plates), a “sell-by” date is required. The “sell-by” date shall be placed on the food at the food processing plant, shall be legible and plainly presented. **All potentially hazardous foods must be sold within 24 hours from being placed on the vehicle.**

For food supplies inside the commissary, date marking is required for refrigerated ready-to-eat potentially hazardous food held for more than 24 hours. It shall be clearly marked at the time of preparation to indicate the date by which the food shall be consumed, which includes the day of preparation:

- Seven (7) calendar days or less, if the food is maintained at 5°C. (41°F.) or less; or
- Four (4) calendar days or less, if the food is maintained at 7°C. (45°F.) or less.

Stored food products need to be dated to ensure rotation, which will control spoilage and help maintain the quality of your foods. Raw meats and poultry must be stored below ready to eat foods. A

## Hand Washing

Each mobile unit must have a fully operational hand sink with hot and cold running water. The sink must be supplied with soap and disposable hand towels.

### How To Properly Wash Hands

Hands and exposed portions of arms must be washed with soap and water. Vigorously rub hands and arms together for at least 20 seconds and thoroughly rinse with clean water. Employees shall pay particular attention to the fingertips, the areas underneath the fingernails and between the fingers.



### When To Wash

- After touching bare human body parts other than clean hands and clean, exposed portions of arms.
- Before putting on gloves.
- After coughing, sneezing, using a handkerchief or disposable tissue, using tobacco, eating or drinking, or using the toilet room.
- When switching between working with raw food and working with ready-to-eat food or when engaging in activities that contaminate the hands.
- After caring for or handling service animals or aquatic animals.

### Bare Hand Contact



Bare hand contact with ready-to-eat foods such as breads, tortillas, chips, produce for juicing, and garnishes is prohibited. **Non-latex**, single-use gloves must be used or utensils, wax paper or single-use wraps. Remember to wash hands before putting on gloves. Change gloves when switching task or when gloves become dirty or worn. Gloves must be worn when employees have sores, burns, and/or bandages on their hands.

### Personal Hygiene

Employees handling open food or drink must be clean and in good health; you should bathe daily and wear clean clothes. It is strictly prohibited to work with open food if you are sick, especially if you have symptoms of diarrhea, vomiting, fever, or if you have any discharge from your nose or eyes. Fingernails must be cut and maintained. All jewelry must be removed prior to handling open food with the exception of a simple wedding band.

## Food Temperatures

### ***Potentially hazardous foods -***

(meats, fish, poultry, eggs, milk, pasta, cooked produce, and dairy products) must be stored and displayed at proper temperatures during transportation, storage, service, etc.

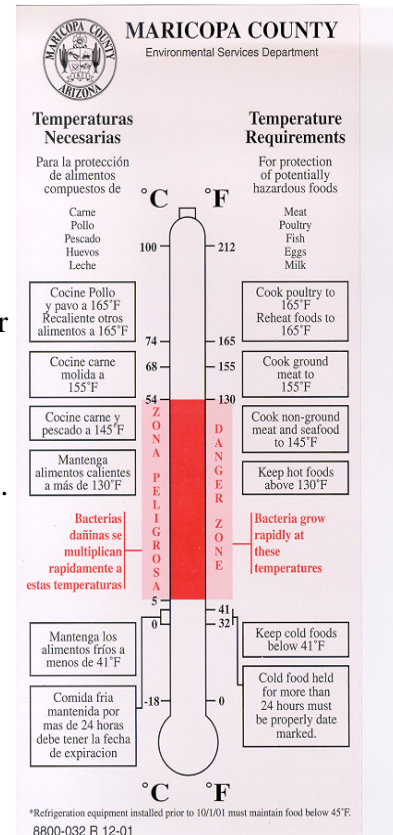
- Reheat food rapidly to **165°F** and hold at **130°F**.
- Hot food must be held at **130°F** or hotter.
- Cold food must be held at **41°F** or colder. During the warm summer months, this is difficult to achieve and extra attention will be needed to ensure potentially hazardous foods are maintained at proper temperatures.
- Refrigerated foods may be reused if they are kept at or below 41 f at all times.

A metal - stem probe thermometer that measures from 0°F to 220°F must be available and used to check food temperatures. *An accurate (calibrated) thermometer will read 32°F in a cupful of ice water.*

**Hot foods cannot be reused the next day. Cooling foods on any mobile food unit is prohibited.**

If any raw or undercooked products will be served, a consumer advisory must be posted on the menu or in a conspicuous place at the booth for consumers to read prior to placing orders. The consumer advisory must consist of two parts:

- ***Disclosure***– identify items which may be served raw or undercooked. This includes hamburgers cooked to order and similar type foods.
- ***Reminder***– indicate that eating raw or undercooked foods may increase the risk of food-borne illness.



## Menu

The menu within a Mobile Food Unit is not limited to certain foods. However, it is essential to understand that all food supplies must fit within existing equipment and storage areas. Mobile Food Units do not have the capacity to handle the same menu as a restaurant. Items requiring extensive preparation or multiple steps are not ideal for service. In addition, hot foods cannot be cooled and reused. Therefore, avoid any menu items that require the food to be cooked and cooled. Careful planning is essential to avoid food waste.

## Equipment and Food Storage

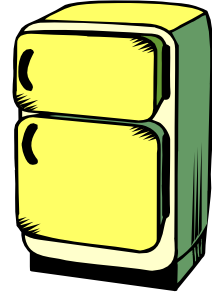
### Cold Holding

Mechanical Refrigeration (NSF or ANSI certified).

Mechanical Freezer (NSF or ANSI certified).

Refrigeration must be fully powered and operational while the Mobile Food Unit is in operation. Please pay special attention to refrigeration temperatures during the hot summer months. In addition, the following items should be addressed in all mobile food units:

- Thermometers must be located in a conspicuous place at all times.
- Raw products (meat, chicken, fish) should be stored below other foods (vegetables, bread)
- Adequate electricity should be available for mechanical units.

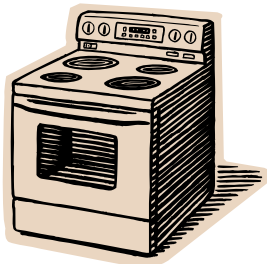


### Hot Holding

Not used for reheating or cooking. All foods must be able to be placed in hot holding equipment. Using crock pots or other types of equipment to keep foods hot is prohibited. Examples of approved hot holding equipment are steam tables or hot holding cabinets.

### Cooking/Reheating

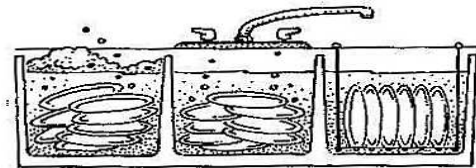
Grill  
Stove  
Fryer  
Oven



**Reminder:** Hot, cooked foods cannot be reused the next day. Cooling cooked foods on any mobile food unit is prohibited. All leftover foods from steam tables or hot holding cabinets must be discarded at the end of each day.

## Cleaning and Sanitizing

- ♦ The utensils and equipment used in food and beverage service are required to be washed and sanitized. The proper sanitation requires the use of a four step procedure—wash, rinse, sanitize, and air dry. Change the water and replace the soap and bleach in the containers frequently to keep the process effective.



- ♦ A container with a sanitizer must be set-up at all times to wipe down counters and other work areas. Change the water frequently to ensure proper sanitizer level is maintained. Use the sanitizer test strips to ensure the level of sanitizer is adequate. For chlorine (bleach), the level should be 100ppm. The test strip will change to a medium blue color.